

Owner closes mixture firm

Bob Rinkenberger, owner of Bob's Stamp Room in St. Louis, has closed his popular mixture dealership. He blamed the USPS crackdown on the sale of common U.S. stamp mixtures by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Rinkenberger said 95% of the material used for his mixtures came from the church.

But it could be the other way around. The church may have been forced out of the stamp business because of Rinkenberger, who was discharged March 30 as a security officer working for the postal inspectors. He was charged with selling illegal mixtures several years ago. He is appealing the discharge, and said he did not know that the mixtures he sold were illegal.

Rinkenberger said he had bought 7,000 to 8,000 pounds of the common U.S. mixtures from the church's Stamps for Missions program for many years and made a small profit on it. He said he was the source of about 33% of all common U.S. mixtures sold in this country.

The church program was voluntarily closed down in December after a visit by postal inspectors.

The crackdown on the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Rinkenberger said, affects more than a source of minor church revenue. "There were lots of old-timers who would get together once or twice a week to cut out stamps and gab," he said. "They're now left with nothing to do." □

Bee mysteries solved

Some of the Mysteries of the Honeybee, enumerated in our January issue, have been solved, thanks to a report from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing of plate activity through September 1989. A report through December will be analyzed in the September issue.

Mystery #1

Which intaglio press?

The diagram on Page 3 of the January issue showed that all Optiforma plates that were made 18 rows across were finished on intaglio Plate 1 on the C Press. We said then that it was unlikely



TAGGING GAP—Vertical line represents the gap found in overall tagging at 12L and 14R. See Page 63.

Hazelton wins TPN jackpot

The winner of a three-year subscription to *TPN* is Bruce W. Hazelton, a new subscriber who entered the *TPN* Sweepstakes by sending in \$30 for a 1990 catalog and a new subscription.

that any Optiforma product was finished on the D Press. We now believe these conclusions to have been correct.

We believe that all Optiforma product made 20 rows wide was printed with intaglio Plate 2 on the C or D Press.

Mystery #2

Which intaglio plate?

No stamps were ever printed on Plate 3, a plate with a low spot, Ken Lawrence reports.

A question was raised about the intaglio plate used to finish printing 18-row D Press offset product because an 18-row Plate 6 was reported as having been assigned for that press.

Since the 18-row Plate 1 was canceled in June 1988, no further printing would have been possible in that format unless another 18-row plate was available. New BEP reports indicate a press run of 18-row plates as late as Oct. 21, 1988.

That means an 18-row intaglio plate we cannot yet identify simply had to be used for that press run.

Please turn to Page 66

Hazelton had previously owned a PNC catalog and had submitted several "earliest known use" dates, all of which are noted in the 1990 catalog. His name is listed as a catalog contributor.

Hazelton got a refund of \$15, the cost of a one-year subscription.

The two winners of one-year subscriptions are both members of PNC³ and had been *TPN* subscribers before they entered the sweepstakes by ordering the 1990 catalog (*TPN* readers who submitted the coupon from the March issue were automatically entered in the sweepstakes).

The winners were Robert O. Read, Jr., and Raphael Peretz. Their subscriptions were simply extended for an extra year.

Winners were selected at random. □

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New paper type found, also a way to tell paper types apart scientifically (even on used stamps). Page 70.

Ken Lawrence's book gets a rave review. Page 68.

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Later and later

Is America turning into a mañana republic where procrastination is the rule?

In the fourth grade, some of us were taught that "procrastination is the thief of time," a line from Edward Young (1683-1765) that was passed on in Benj. Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanack*. But catch this:

On March 22 USPS announced the literacy postal card, issued that very day. The news release, *Stamp News USA* No. 22, marked "For release March 22" (which means that most newspapers would carry it March 23, or a day too late), said "first day of issue cancellations will be available at ..." Note the future tense.

It should be noted that *Stamp News USA* used to announce new stamps and stationery as much as a month in advance.

So what does one make of *Stamp News USA* No. 37, issued for release on May 18:

"The Postal Service has announced that it will (future tense) issue a souvenir card for the Stamp World London '90 international exhibition, which will be held (future tense) in Alexander Palace in London May 3-13."

Not only was the palace named Alexandra, but please note that the future tense was twice used for an event that had ended five days before the day of the announcement.

Is it any wonder that *Linn's* editorialized May 28 about being left out in the cold on philatelic news? In fact, things must be even worse than they seem.

For many years, USPS had a dual schedule of news releases. It sent out one batch to the weeklies that could print color about two weeks before it sent out the black-and-white versions to your hometown newspapers. Now,

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even the weeklies are kept waiting.

That means that collectors often learn of new issues too late to obtain cacheted covers for first-day handback service or for preparing unofficial covers.

What is not known as this is written is whether USPS is also keeping the first-day community waiting.

In the past USPS sent out a top-secret ("You'll be shot if you tell!") announcement of planned stamps to cachet-makers. That gave them time (sometimes) to prepare covers.

On stamps like the \$1 Seaplane, Artmaster heard a rumor in late March or early April that the 05 Circus Wagon would be replaced by the \$1 Seaplane. It halted production on the Circus Wagon. It learned of the \$1 Seaplane when the rest of us did.

Bill Toutant of Artmaster said USPS' record is spotty. *TPN* thinks USPS' record is terrible.

Letters to TPN:

DMM change wasn't reason for delay

In the May *TPN* you state that the late release of information about the \$1 Seaplane was "possibly because of the need to change the DMM" to reflect the new five-stamp [purchasing] minimum.

The new policy was developed as a result of my conversation with Bob Brown, who then checked with others. This was done after I received the news release.

The late release of philatelic information is a much larger problem that originates at USPS headquarters.

Wayne Youngblood
Sidney, Ohio

In reply: Youngblood, a staff writer for *Linn's* and a member of the PNC Study Group, did not spell out the problem for *TPN*, but a *Linn's* editorial did in the issue of May 28 after *Linn's* was left without first-day information on the new plastic ATM stamps and on the George Caleb Bingham postal card. It said:

"Never has the USPS been more acutely aware of the bottom line than it is today, as reflected by the host of new products and promotions we have seen

over the last several years. But USPS should take care that its long-standing customers, who've been buying new U.S. issues for decades, are not ignored in a feverish drive for new business. Aggressive new marketing strategies must not leave these established customers out in the cold."

Do they come in 100s?

I found the \$1 Seaplane at the post office of the San Francisco Stamp Show with the upper 20% of the stamps on untagged paper. Unfortunately, a little old lady purchased both plate number strips of five from the roll and would not sell me one.

[In reply: This is the first word of \$1 Seaplane in rolls of 100. *TPN* called Washington. The answer: "They don't exist in rolls of 100. They were printed only in rolls of 500."]

She would not sell me one and spoke no English. Her daughter could not persuade her that I specialized in these varieties.

She had bought these for her grandson. I hope he has a UV light.

H. Harry Mueggenburg
Carmichael, Calif.

Honeybee in Japan

Do you have any idea where I could find one of the unofficial souvenir cards produced for BEP employees?

Or the show card/cancel showing the Honeybee coil that was used at a show in Japan by the USPS but not available here in the United States? I have asked about, but have found neither.

Margaret Stanchfield
Kent, Wash.

In reply: This is the first indication that such a card was issued by USPS in Japan. A check through old *Philatelic Catalogs* showed no such souvenir cards. Can any reader add any details?

As to the BEP card, only about 80 such cards were prepared. They were given to BEP employees. How to obtain one from one of the lucky employees is not something that *TPN* can answer.

Why a long-wave UV lamp?

Robert W. Lord bought a long-wave UV lamp and then wrote: "Would appreciate information on how to use a long-wave lamp for PNCs. No instructions came with the lamp."

There are three basic uses of long-wave UV in philately:

- To check for repairs.
- To check for fluorescence, whether in paper or added as a form of tagging.
- In some instances, to differentiate between colors that are alike in daylight.

Before touching on any of these, it may be useful to mention that this form of UV, also called black light, is quite common in daily life.

In the 1960s, many teen-agers used black light to illuminate fluorescent posters on their walls. It is commonly used at dances to check whether guests have paid or are gate-crashing (fluorescent ink is applied to the wrist at first entry). It is seen in some advertising that glows.

For PNC collectors, all three philatelic uses come into play.

Any stamp that has been washed, repaired, or altered usually shows some clues under UV, especially removed cancels, glue used to join papers, or chemicals used to change or remove colors.

Since many foreign stamps are tagged only with fluorescent compounds (West Germany, Israel, Canada, among others), such tagging is only visible in long-wave UV.

Short-wave UV is a must for U.S., British and other tagging that uses phosphorescence, not fluorescence. Phosphorescence is not visible in long-wave UV, but is in short-wave UV.

Long-wave UV is also used to check for fluorescence in paper, commonly called high bright paper. Such stamps are known and collected from the United States, United Nations, Canada, and Sweden. They are good, solid varieties and are ignored by the Scott catalogs. The defunct Minkus catalogs listed many of them.

U.S. tagging works on the principle that a phosphor is excited by short-wave UV, causing it to glow. The glow, which lasts for a split second, can still be detected after the excitement and is used to activate U.S. postal machinery, which, like the British, works only on the afterglow, not the direct excitement.

The reason for choosing afterglow reactions was to avoid reactions from the

Back to basics

many things that fluoresce, including envelopes, stickers, labels, and inks.

But even in PNC collecting, we run into fluorescence. The upper left envelope on the 21.1¢ Letters stamp is printed in magenta ink that fluoresces. It glows under both long- and short-wave UV.

And we run into it when looking at the stamps to check on paper types. Some papers do not fluoresce at all, and we call them "dead." Others do fluoresce to some extent.

The *PNC Catalog* explains how to differentiate among paper types by using fluorescence.

The only PNC stamp, so far, in which there is a UV color difference is the 12.5¢ Pushcart, where two UV colors, both now mentioned in the catalog, can be detected only in long-wave UV. The colors are not easily told apart in daylight or in short-wave UV.

The classic example of a color-different stamp, however, is the 1DM olive Dove of Berlin of 1948 and 1949. The Michel catalog lists three UV colors of this overprinted stamp. The distinctions were first reported by Steve Esrati, who actually found four different UV colors, one of which, the "black Dove" is still ignored by Michel.

Esrati also discovered two types of fluorescence applied to the West German Famous German series of 1961, one using a BASF product called Lumogen (much rarer on stamps), the other a knockoff put into the paper by the mill after the German post office figured out how BASF's proprietary product worked and then duplicated it, avoiding royalty payments to BASF after that. (See Stephen G. Esrati, "A Philatelic Detective Story," *The Congress Book*, American Philatelic Congress, 1977.)

Sammler Lupe, a German stamp magazine, thereafter, started calling the various shades of fluorescence "Esrati colors."

Phil Rose notes that another classic example from Germany is the 1-Mark Building Series stamp of 1948, which was printed by two firms. The Westermann printing is green in long-wave UV; the Bagel printing is black.

Rose, a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group, started a U.S. tagging

club in the late 1960s that once had 90 members and issued a magazine called *The Tag Rag*.

Finally, we come to an area still being studied, postal automation. Postal regulations now require that U.S. meter inks should be fluorescent. U.S. cancellation inks may be heading in that direction, as well.

Some of these inks fluoresce in long-wave UV, too.

Anyway, it is useful to keep envelopes intact until they have been looked at under UV. You never know what you may find. The Esrati discoveries on German stamps came from dumping kiloware on a table and examining it in UV. □

[This article was written by Esrati, who felt compelled to mention his own efforts in the field. Comments from Rose and Ken Lawrence were incorporated.]

Both untagged, says Youngblood of Smith strips

Scott F. Smith of Colorado Springs reported here (Page 38, March 1990) that he had found tagging on the shiny-gum 18¢ Monument with the numbers 33333 and on the service inscribed 21.1¢ Letters with the numbers 111111.

Smith said at that time that he had never found these stamps without tagging. Steve Esrati sent him two untagged strips, but Smith believed that they were tagged, too.

He sent the strips to Wayne L. Youngblood, the tagging writer for *Linn's*, noting that all UV lamps may not act the same.

Youngblood examined the strips and found them untagged. His explanation for Smith's concern was that the lacquer on both strips was slightly reactive in short-wave UV, but that it did not contain tagging phosphors.

The 1990 *PNC Catalog* lists the ZIP+4 21.1¢ Letters with 111121 as always being tagged in error. The dull-gum Washington Monument with 33333 is shown with separate prices for tagged and untagged.

The catalog lists no other tagged precancels. Unfortunately, Page ix of the Introduction still refers to Smith's strips as tagging precancels. □

Catalog drops defunct Minkus numbers...

One of the most visible changes in the 1990 *PNC Catalog* is the lack of *Minkus Catalog* numbers.

As in other changes that have taken place, this one was spurred by discussion inside the PNC Study Group.

"Why are we continuing to list Minkus numbers?" Myron G. Hill, Jr., asked. "In effect, by using them, we are indicating to collectors that Minkus numbers are still in use although, in fact, Minkus appears to be defunct as a catalog."

The last catalog published under the Minkus name appeared in 1988 with a 1987 copyright. It was a ghost of its former self and appeared to be a platform for an unscrupulous stamp dealer's pricing policies.

The most notorious example was the \$425,000 price for a used single of a 12¢ Clay with grill with the notation that only one used copy of this stamp was known. By contrast, the Scott price on this stamp (Scott 140) is \$4,500.

Another suspicious example was the inclusion of Social Security tax stamps, with a \$45,000 price on one value. The dealer suspected of rigging *Minkus Catalog* prices happened to be selling these labels. They are unlisted in other catalogs.

Harry H. De Jong, publisher of that last Minkus, asked Steve Esrati to supply listings for PNCs, but did not use them. The treatment of PNCs was very poor.

But the most important reason for dropping Minkus numbers is simply because there are no more Minkus numbers. These used to be available (after the issuance through 1980 of the last batch of real Minkus catalogs) through the quarterly *Minkus Stamp Journal*. That, too, has ceased publication.

Michael Lawrence, publisher of *Linn's*, said his newspaper is still using the numbers on new issues to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest, but has great difficulty getting the numbers.

Several other changes that are not so evident have been made in the *PNC Catalog*. One is the way maximum possible PNCs were calculated. In the past, reports from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) carried a footnote stating that impression totals were based on the number of subjects. That statement has been dropped from BEP reports for more than a year.

Despite a request for information to BEP, we have been unable to determine

whether the dropping of the footnote indicated a change in the way impression totals are reported. However, having no other guidance to go by, we have had to assume that the impression totals are now for a complete revolution of the press cylinder, not for the number of subjects (which is half a revolution, or what BEP has been calling a "sheet" of coil stamps).

That meant that we could now multiply a B Press impression total by 18 rows, to arrive at a total for the highest number of PNCs that could have been printed. In the past, we divided this by 2 because there would be no plate numbers on every other impression (the half plate or "sheet" that had no plate numbers).

Meanwhile, Ken Lawrence was able to determine the exact number of PNCs delivered to the Postal Service for some plate numbers. In almost all instances, Lawrence's numbers were a fraction of what we had been labeling "Maximum PNCs." Wherever possible, therefore, we have substituted "Total PNCs," the numbers reported by Lawrence, for the "Max. PNCs."

We may very well be wrong in using a new method to calculate recent PNC issues, but it has become extremely difficult to elicit any information from BEP. The reason for this is that BEP has begun a defense of its very existence against threats to have all U.S. stamps printed in the private sector.

In the course of the past few years, BEP has been forced by USPS to reveal its trade secrets to its private competitors.

BEP has also been forced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to meet higher (and costlier) standards than its competitors, which are not under the jurisdiction of the EPA in the District of Columbia. BEP, for example, has had to change to water-based printing inks because of toxic solvents in its previous inks; the private firms can still use those cheaper inks.

In addition, BEP has been angered by a Freedom of Information Act request from a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group, Richard J. Nazar, seeking data on papers and press runs.

The result of all this at BEP has been that letters have gone unanswered, requests have been denied, information has been kept under lock and key.

This is not true only about the Plate

Number Coil Study Group, but also about other philatelic organizations and publications.

The Bureau Issues Association, which used to do intensive studies of BEP plate numbers, has given up the effort completely in respect to all the six-digit plate numbers in use since April 1985. According to George V. H. Godin, its editor, BIA's new *Durand Standard Plate Number Catalog* will list only the suffixes (the numbers we collect as "plate numbers" on PNCs), not the BEP plate numbers.

In addition, BIA's research into plate numbers by John L. Larson, who is in charge of BIA's Plate Number Check List Service for plate numbers made since Plate 20,001, stops with the stamps issued April 1985, Godin said.

The reason for BIA's cutoff is that BEP information in the past few years has been unreliable and rife with errors. In the past, BIA could send a person to BEP to sit down and go over the records to straighten out any possible mistakes. That is no longer possible since BEP raised the drawbridges over its moat.

A second avenue for correcting errors, telephoning Linda Foster of USPS, editor of the BEP reports, has been closed to philatelic journalists for more than three years (see *TPN* for March 1990).

The PNC Study Group still relies on BEP reports and will continue to do so. But some of the data reported here and in the *PNC Catalog* must be accepted by readers as being wrong, including the attempts by the PNC Study Group to make sense out of inconclusive or conflicting data.

The Study Group, for example, has never been able to reconcile printing totals for Plates 5, 6 and 7 of the 17¢ Electric Auto. It is believed that we will never have complete and reliable data for the 25¢ Flag Over Yosemite or the 25¢ Honeybee. Our data on the 2¢ Locomotive are study group calculations.

However, the catalog will continue to be as honest as it can be, telling you in every instance when it has interpreted BEP data, when it has had to depend on study group calculations, when it simply has to go with bad information and tell you it is bad.

Under the circumstances, it's the best we can do.

It's also the least we can do. □

If your mailing label says "4-90," your subscription has expired. Please renew.

...but putting it out was rough

All does not go smoothly in putting together a catalog by committee.

Proposal: Leland Warzala, who had indicated that he thought the two precancel styles on the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon and the 12.5¢ Pushcart should be omitted (see *TPN* for May 1990), told Kim Cuniberti that it might be a good idea to keep the information, but only for the Pushcart.

Result: The information has been left out for both stamps.

Proposal: Cuniberti came up with a wonderful idea. "How about indicating the last printing date and issue of the Cottrell presses?" he noted on a returned proof.

Result: We almost lost this one. Not until the Plymouth Show, where Dr. Frank L. Shively, Jr., was exhibiting his 8.3¢ Ambulances on April 28, two weeks before the catalog's date with the printer, were these dates finally ascertained. Dr. Shively spelled them out in his exhibit. Ken Lawrence filled in the details on the basis of a proof for his book.

The date the Cottrells were junked had never been reported by BEP.

Proposal: Cuniberti, who originally proposed the notion that precancel gaps move with the stopping and starting of the press, was responsible for killing the following statement from the introduction:

When a given stamp is known on more than one paper, it is clear proof that the stamp was printed more than once.

The "clear proof" went up in smoke when Cuniberti pointed out that paper can be changed while the press keeps running (a "flying feed").

"I have to disagree," Cuniberti said. "It can indicate a different printing, but when I see 8.3¢ Ambulance from the B Press from Plate 1, with the gap at 9L, on Type I and Type II paper, I have to believe it is one printing. The same goes for the same stamp with the gap at 7L, which is found on Type II and Type III paper."

Result: The sentence now reads "can indicate" instead of "is clear proof."

Proposal: A totally different discussion came from Thom E. Wheeler, who was concerned about the disparate prices for paired plates. He noted for example that prices for Plate 3 (\$130 for PS/3; \$140 for PS/5) on the 5.2¢ Sleigh differed from prices for Plate 5 (\$120 and \$130). Shouldn't they be the same, he asked, since the plates were paired?

Result: The prices throughout the catalog continued to reflect the average of prices charged by dealers for a given strip of that plate number. In many instances, condition enters into the pricing of some dealers, who are fussy about the difference between "fine" and "very fine."

Proposal: George V. H. Godin disagreed with the use of "R" numbers for second versions of a denomination in which the design was totally different. "You can't say that a 17¢ Auto plate was 'redesigned' to become a 17¢ Dog Sled," he said. "You ought to go with a different suffix on the catalog number."

Result: Welcome to the world of X, Y, and Z. The 5¢ Mail Wagon and 17¢ Dog Sled now are 5T1X and 17T2X, respectively. The 05 Circus Wagon was all set to be 05T1Y before it was abruptly postponed, leading Thom Wheeler to mutter aloud: "Oh, 5T1. Why?"

Proposal: On another level, several members of the study group disliked the typography. Myron G. Hill, Jr., did not like the dual headings on each page and suggested putting one heading on left-hand (verso) pages and another on the right (recto).

Others did not like the square dots below "Plate Number Coil Catalog 1990."

Result: We may find a better way of handling type next year.

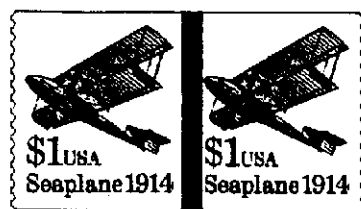
Proposal: Godin has been critical for several years about the way the computer spaces some letters, especially "rn," which, he said, came out looking like an "m." Hill joined him in that comment this year. The technology exists to do something about it, but the catalog editor, Steve Esrati, has not yet learned how to use the computer program to do so.

Result: As they used to say in Brooklyn, "Wait till next year!"

All the co-workers made many suggestions that have been adopted. Your comments are always welcome, too. After all, ours is the catalog that listens.

Major changes this year include the addition of notations on the existence of purple machine cancels; discussion in the introduction about the presses used to print PNCs, and a complete review of all BEP data since 1981, to include second and later dates on which plates were sent to press.

In addition there are many more advertisements. □



\$1 Seaplane's overall tagging is off B Press

BEP has used a new type of tagging on the \$1 Seaplane, an overall tagging applied on the B Press by a roller with a 26-stamp interval.

The ends of the tagging roller leave an untagged vertical stripe about 2 or 3mm in width across the stamp.

The Postal Service never said what kind of paper the \$1 Seaplane would appear on. It turned out to look like phosphored stamps, but when Scott F. Smith examined a long \$1T1 strip in UV, he found a gap at what he called 11L.

The gaps found by *TPN* were 11 stamps left of the stamp with the number; and since the stamp with the number is 1L, our find was 12L. In addition, we found another gap at 14R, meaning that we are back to the standard B Press precancel and/or tagging mat, which has an interval of 26.

The tagging is very uniform, unlike the mottled tagging on the 25¢ Yosemite. All previous PNCs printed on the B Press had block tagging.

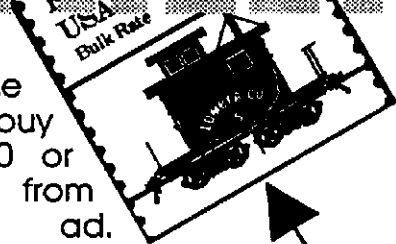
Block tagging was adopted because BEP said the abrasive tagging destroyed its perforator pins. Block tagging, if in register with the stamps, places the tagged area so it misses the space where the perforations go.

When USPS asked BEP to print stamps on paper that was phosphored at the paper mill, BEP cited broken pins as one reason for saying no. The Postal Service countered with its claim that it is losing \$50 million a year to stamp washing, and that tagging over the printing makes washing easier. So USPS offered to pay BEP for its broken pins.

This may have spurred BEP to abandon block tagging on the B Press and go for overall tagging. That would leave a gap every 26 stamps if the same technology is used as was used on B Press Flag stamps. We welcome reports of gaps other than 12L/14R.

BEP confirmed that the \$1 Seaplane was tagged on the B Press. □

FREE!



Hoseline
If you buy
for \$50 or
more from
this ad.

Remember, the 1990 catalog is my price list for VF. Add 25% for XF (but that cancels out if you get the 25% discount for buying more than \$100 worth).

Some items are in limited supply.
** means I'm buying.

SPECIAL:



Quotes only,
in strip of 5:
XF \$10; VF
\$8; Fine \$6;
Poor \$3.50.

4c Stagecoach, Plate 2, has "Quotation marks" around "18." It also shows serious chill-roller doubling at 3L and 3R. Plate 1 also has the doubling, but no "quotation marks."

I have matching numbered strips of 8 of both plates, a terrific way to show off chill-roller doubling.

Pair of strips, intense damage, \$40; lesser damage, \$25.

LONG STRIPS:

Just in, numbered strips of 17 showing Gap 6L and 6R on 5.2c Sleigh. Plates 1 and 2. Sold as a set only. Set 1: Condition of Plate 1 and 2 is Superb. The set: \$75.00

Set 2: Condition of both strips is VF. The set: \$50.00
17c Auto, Plates 5 and 7, Type A, Gap 5R (but on these strips it shows up as 7L because of the "Auto with Antenna" mat variety at the gap). Set of 2 strips of 12. \$20 XF; VF \$18.

11c Stutz, Plate 3 with "Cloth on hood" variety on numbered stamp. Strip of 11 to show mild chill-roller doubling in "B" of "Bearcat" and first "3" in date. XF \$25; VF \$22.50

3.4c School Bus, PS/10 to show intensive chill-roller damage on Plates 1 and 2. The set F only. \$35.

5.2c Sleigh, Plates 4 and 6. Gap 3 1/2 L in strips of 10. The set: Superb \$65; XF \$60; VF \$55; F \$50

10.9c Hansom Cab, Plate 2, low entry 2L, strip of 10, Gap 3R. Fine only. \$80.

17c Auto, Plates 5 or 7 in strips of 10. Type C, Gap 4L. XF \$28. VF \$25. F \$22.

VARIETIES IN STOCK

1T4V1, chipped plate, F, PS6	6.30	10.1T1V1, Artillery shell I, PS8, Superb,	27.50
1T5, Type II paper, VF, PS6	3.25	10.1T1V3, Flying hyphen, PSS, Superb	15.00
1T6V1, crack 1R, VF, PSS	9.00	10T1V5, Dot over "L" of "OIL", PS8, Superb	7.00
1T6, Type II paper, VF, PSS	3.25	10T1, sprouting "1" in first "1" of "101", Strip of 5, no	
2T2, tagging break 4L, screwhead, PS6	2.50	number, Superb,	5.00
2T3V2, smooting T, VF, PSS	15.00	10.1T1PV1, Artillery shell I, PS6, Superb,	15.00
2T3V2, smooting T cont., VF, PSS	17.00	10.1T1PV3, Flying hyphen, PSS, Superb	15.00
(third)		10T1PM, Anyshell III, Strip of 5, no #, Superb	8.50
2T3V3, Tail on T, VF, PSS	11.00	10T1PV7, Perched parrot, strip of 5, no #, XF	15.00
2T6, tagging break 4L, screwhead, PS6	2.50		
**2T8V2, 2 lumps of coal, PS6, F	9.00		
2T8, tagging break 2L, PS6	2.50		
2T8, tagging break 3L, PS6	2.50		
2T10, tagging break 2L, PS6	2.50		
2T10, tagging break 3L, PS6	2.50		
2T18V1, spike, no number, Strip of 5	15.00		
3T1XV1, Flaming Wagon, Strip of 5	25.00		
3T1XV1cd, 1st upward cont., Strip of 5	25.00		
3T1XV1cd, 2nd upward cont., Strip of 5	25.00		
SPECIAL: SET OF 3 WAGONS	70.00		
3.4, no period on Org. PC, no number,			
pair	1.50		
Same, strip of 4	1.75		
4T8R, crack under wheel, no number,			
strip of 5	2.00		
4.9T1P, Hand brake SR, VF	20.00		
4.9T4, long whip, PSS, VF	16.00		
4.9T4, short whip, PSS, VF	20.00		
Same, XF	20.00		
4.9T4P, Gap 2L, XF, PSS	15.00		
Same, Gap 1L, XF, PS6	14.38		
Same, Line Gap, PS7, XF	16.00		
Same, No Gap, PSS, XF	20.50		
4.9T5PV1 and 1c, Rain Crack and			
cont., number cut, matching set	100.00		
4.9T6PV1, Buggy Reir, Superb, PSS	60.00		
5T1, color variety, PSS with matching			
PS3 in normal color for comparison: F	13.50		
Same, Plate 2, XF	18.75		
5.2T2PV3, No Gap, Sleigh Whip II, PSS, VF	85.00		
5.2T3P, Spill plate number, PS3	15.00		



5.2T4P, Gap 3L, PS10, Superb	100.00	11T1V1, Brake shoe, no #, Strip of 5, XF,	13.50
		Same, PC	10.75
5.5T1V1, Burned rubber, clearly seen, PSS, VF	9.00	**11T1PV2, Hoseline II, Strip 3, no #VF	30.00
Same, crack very, very faint, PS6, VF	10.00	11T3V2, Break in flender and damaged plate number, PSS, XF,	18.00
6T1PV1, Blobs 1R, PSS, VF	9.00	Same, PS3	12.50
7.1T1P, dot under "1" of "1920s," PSS, VF	5.00	11T3, arrow on hood at 2R, PSS, VF	12.50
		16.7T1PV1, Spill load popcorn, PS15, F	17.00
		Same, PS15, VF	20.00
		17T1, tagging break 2L, VF	7.50
		Same, Plate 2, VF	7.50
		17T3, Tagging gap 3L, Type II paper, Superb, PSS,	
		tagging appears as tiny flecks of phosphor	12.50
		17T4, Tagging gap 3L, Type II paper, Superb, PSS,	
		tagging like tiny flecks of phosphor	12.50
		Same, VF	10.00
		17T5V1, Reclining comma, PSS, Superb	12.50
		17T7V1, Oil drop, XF, PSS	15.00
		17T7V2, dot over E, Poor (clear number, line misses	
		perfs) PSS	15.00
		17T7, chipped joint line, PSS, VF	12.50
		18M3PV2, Monument, dull, tag, XF, PSS	6.00
		18T1V1, lightning bolt, PSS, Superb	145.00
		**18T5, antenna on survey, wanted, pay \$7.50	
		18T9V1, lightning bolt, PSS, Superb	25.00
		Same, F	10.00
		18T10V1, lightning bolt, PSS, Superb	25.00
		Same, F	10.00
		20T2V2, "v" crack II (very faint), PS/2, XF	100.00
		20T15V1, Wounded "P," PS5, VF	15.00
		21T1PV1, Railroad tracks, no #, Strip 5, XF	27.50
		21T1PV1c, Continuation, no #, Strip of 5, XF	27.50
		25M1V1, Honeybee, short 1 with sent. C Press, PSS;	
		VF	22.50

HASH MARK

5.2T4P, Gap 3L, PS10, Superb	100.00
5.5T1V1, Burned rubber, clearly seen, PSS, VF	9.00
Same, crack very, very faint, PS6, VF	10.00
6T1PV1, Blobs 1R, PSS, VF	9.00
7.1T1P, dot under "1" of "1920s," PSS, VF	5.00



7.4T2V1, Blown line, PSS, XF,	75.00
8.3T1PV2, Line Gap, No plain num ber	
(from top row but misc) XF 9T not misc)	
	125.00
8.3T1, Low, whole number, PSS, XF	50.00
8.3T1P, Low, whole number, Gap 1R, PSS, XF	22.00
8.3T1V3, Double number, whole at bottom, cut at top,	
PSS, Superb	40.00
8.5T1P, red smudges all over stamps from ozarcad,	
EP8, PS6, F,	5.00
9.3T2V1, U crack, faint, PS6, F	15.00
Same, Poor (number clear, line does not	
touch)	12.00
9.3T2PV1, U crack, faint, PSS, VF	22.50
9.3T3PV1, Line Gap, Smoking g, XF, PSS	42.00
9.3T3PV1 and PV1c, Smoking g and continuation,	
Line gap, PS 10, matching set, F	80.00

HASH MARK	
9.3T5P, Gap 3L, PS10, VF	100.00
9.3T6P, Gap 3L, PS10, VF	100.00

4.8c Double Gaps	
Plate 1, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 4, VF	10.00
Plate 2, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 4, VF	10.00
Plate 3, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 3, VF	
(This is low, but no Rain Crack)	10.00
Plate 4, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 4, VF	10.00
Plate 4, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 3, VF	10.00
Plate 6, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 2, VF	10.00
Plate 6, Gap 2R, PS7, Row 4, VF	10.00

STEVE ESRATI

P.O. Box 20130
Shaker Heights, OH 44120
(216) 561-9393

Dealing in PNC varieties since 1985. Also a complete stock of regular PNCs, priced according to the 1990 catalog.
PNC SG, PNC², APS, BIA

Catalog corrections and updates

Catalog updates

No updates yet to the 1990 Catalog.

Catalog corrections

Page 14—When we switched to the X suffix for stamps with a different design, we forgot the 3¢ Conestoga Wagon. The catalog number should read 3T1X. (Scott Smith)

Page 29—10.1T2Pi and 10.1T3Pi, the footnote incorrectly says gaps exist 13 stamps apart. They are 26 stamps apart. (Scott Smith)

Page 44—The precancel for 21T1P is described as black Style 18. It should say red. (Scott Smith)

Page 44—Two cancellation dates are given for 25T2. The plate was canceled 09/23/88.

Face	Design	Plate	Gap	Paper	Scarcity
10.1	Oil Wagon Red precancel	2	2R	III	C*
			4R	III	A-B
			5R	III	A*
			6R	III	A
			7R	III	A
			8R	III	C/A
3		3	2R	III	A
			3R	III	A
			4R	III	A
			5R	III	A
			6R	III	A
			7R	III	A
			8R	III	A

Save Aug. 23-26 for PNC³ at STAmPshOw

The Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC³) will stage its annual meeting at STAmPshOw in Cincinnati.

The APS shindig will run from Aug. 23 to Aug. 26.

The show will be the final event in this year's World Series of Philately, with winners from APS regional shows competing for the grand award.

In addition, there will be an open stamp and philatelic literature exhibition. [Neither TPN nor the *Plate Number Coil Catalog* will be entered because Steve Esrati doesn't believe in buying himself an award.]

More than 100 dealers are expected at the bourse in the Cincinnati Convention Center.

The PNC³ meeting, among other things, should include the installation of a new president because President Don Eastman is ineligible for re-election.

Ballots were to be included in this month's issue of *Coil Line*. □

"F" stamp to show tulip

Despite BEP documents saying there would be orchids on "F" stamps, a BIA tour of the Bureau during NAPEX saw the stamps and saw that they show tulips, not orchids. □

Pages 58, 59—The note under "How to use these checklists" refers to Appendices C and D. It should say Appendices D and E.

Page 65—The table showing B Press precancel gaps is incomplete for the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon with the red precancel. This was indicated by the "Errata" in the Table of Contents. A more complete table appears below. Gap 1R has been reported but not seen by the PNC Study Group. (Scott Smith, Kim Cuniberti) □

Washburn notes earlier EKUs in *Coil Line*

Writing in the June issue of *Coil Line*, the monthly journal of PNC³, Robert Washburn has added several earlier dates for earliest known usage of PNCs.

Washburn has advanced the date for the following PNCs, listed in order of their appearance in the 1990 *PNC Catalog*:

Page 2—20F6, Plate 6 of the 20¢ Flag from Aug. 19, 1982, to Aug. 2, 1982.

Page 3—20F10, Plate 10 of the 20¢ Flag from Feb. 9, 1984, to Feb. 7, 1984.

Page 3—20F11, Plate 11 of the 20¢ Flag from March 22, 1984, to March 20, 1984.

Page 33—14T3, Plate 3 of the 14¢ Iceboat from Jan. 25, 1986, to Jan. 21.

Page 43—20T16, Plate 16 of the 20¢ Fire Pumper from June 30, 1982, to June 23, 1982. □

I goofed!
In designing Joe R. Lane's ad in the 1990 PNC Catalog, I left out his telephone number. Therefore, I hereby resolve to run his number free in TPN for a year as an adlet.

Steve Esrati
INTAGLIO MISSING. No black Honeybee, no plate number. A pair, just \$180. Joe R. Lane, P.O. Box 31021, Houston, Tex. 77035. (713) 774-3970.
How's that, Joe?

Book-collectors' edition
Transportation Coil Issues
by Joseph Agris, M.D.
Only 60 of 500 remain
\$27 postpaid



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ADLETS

Classified ads are 15 cents a word. There is no charge for your address. Members of PNC³ are entitled to one 25-word free adlet each year.

UNTAGGED ERRORS: Breakwagon, Yosemite, others for trade or sale. Untagged coils on commercial covers on approval. Buying tag varieties. TAG SHIFT HARRY Muegenburg, 3525 Bluff Court, Carmichael, CA 95608. (5-90)

DENNIS CHAMBERLAIN has a deal you can't afford to pass up. See below. (4-90)

NOW ILLUSTRATED! PNC VARIETIES (\$12.50) and PNCs ON COVER (\$7.50), 1990 editions. Lots of new listings! Special: Save \$2 when you buy both, \$18 postpaid. Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976. (4-90)

USED Transportation plate number singles, pairs and strips. Very challenging, interesting, and inexpensive. Some covers also. Price list for SASE. Max Hickox, Box 21081, Denver, Colo. 80221. (5-90)

1989 LIGHTHOUSE PNC strip supplement: \$25 list, my price \$21.25. No supplement this year for singles album. Esrati, P. O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

BUYING PNC FDCs. Write first. Thomas Giff, 19959 Haviland Ave., Bronx, NY 10472. (4-90)

COVERS WANTED: Any with 17¢ Auto for third class or for 2d ounce first class. Also other reliable third-class usages. Make offer to Lenz, 37211 Alper Dr., Sterling Hts., MI 48077. (4-90)

COMPLETE Lighthouse PNC album in 2 binders. \$320. Steve Esrati, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

COLLECT GERMANY? I provide a specialized new issues service at 15% over face. Coils, booklets, horizontal pairs from coil stamps, FD sheetlets, annual book with black print. Write for details. Esrati, P. O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

LITERATURE BARGAIN: 5 Esrati catalogs (1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989) for \$40. Wanted: USPS *Philatelic Catalogs* before April 1982. Ken Lawrence, P.O. Box 3568, Jackson MS 39207. (4-90)

JOIN THE CLUB. Join PNC³/ For details, write Eric Ruskow, P.O. Box 7386, Des Moines, IA 50309.

ENDOW A LIBRARY. Give a 1990 Catalog to a philatelic library. \$12.00. P.O.B. 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

INVENTORY REDUCTION special. 50% off half my mint PNC strips, FDCs, gum, gaps, color varieties. List #16E, send SASE. Dennis Chamberlain, P.O. Box 753, Collierville, TN 38017. (4-90)

MISSING your 1990 catalog? 2 copies came back without labels. Was one yours? Write Catalog, P.O. Box 20130 Shaker Hts. OH 44120.

BEP data solve Bee mysteries

Continued from Page 59

Plate 6 was made Sept. 29, 1988, the very day, we believe, the attempt was made to print on Plate 3. We are now confident that Plate 6 does exist. (In January, Ken Lawrence had questioned the existence of Plate 6, a plate that was numerically out of sequence because no Plate 5 was then known.)

An intaglio plate with these dimensions (18 rows) would have been necessary to print Honeybees in roll sizes larger than 100 because larger coils requires 18-row width. It is likely, therefore, that if Plate 6 stamps ever turn up, they will be on large (3,000-stamp) rolls.

Mystery #4

What's with Plate 3?

As mentioned above, we now believe no stamps were ever printed from intaglio Plate 3.

Mystery #5

Lacking D Press data

The BEP report through December does report on offset plates made for the D Press being sent to press. Only data through September could be analyzed for this issue. However, this mystery ends as no mystery at all.

We do have a new mystery.

Mystery #11

What happened Oct. 21?

We now have a report of a press run on Oct. 21, 1988. The BEP report indicates that no stamps were printed on this press run. Five 18-row Optiforma plates were used in this ill-fated run.

Could this be the press run that produced the Honeybees on phosphored paper that were later found to have had insufficient tagging and were destroyed? If so, BEP would be correct in saying that no stamps were produced.

The plates that shrank

More than anything else, we must tackle the mystery of the 20-row plates that changed into 18-row plates.

As indicated on Page 4 of the January issue, one explanation for the change in plate size could have been that the BEP reports had been in error.

BEP plate activity through December 1989

CAT	SERIES	PLATE	ASSIGNED	TO PRESS	CANCELED	SUBJ.	IMPRESS.	Max. PNCs	PRESS
25F7	FLAG	181273-7	11/22/88	01/27/89	06/23/89	480	6,661,308	133,226,000	C
25F8	FLAG	181384-8	12/08/88	12/19/88	08/25/88	432	4,217,500	75,915,000	C
25F9	FLAG	181664-9	01/19/89			480			C
25F10	FLAG	182945-10	05/22/89	06/09/89	12/02/89	480	548,308	10,806,000	C
25F13	FLAG	184547-13	10/17/89			480			C
25F14	FLAG	184832-14	11/09/89			480			C
25M1	BEE	180014-1	04/14/88	05/13/88	06/21/89	432	3,066,769	55,543,842	C
25M2	BEE	180527-2	07/06/88	07/20/88	05/26/89	480	3,044,712	60,894,240	D
25M5	BEE	182731-5	05/03/89			480			D
7.1T1P	TRANS	182560-1	04/14/89	05/02/89		468			B
				12/13/89					
8.4T1P	TRANS	180445-1	06/22/88	07/13/88	06/21/89	468	1,607,808	28,926,000	B
8.4T3P	TRANS	183931-3	08/02/89			468			B
10.1T3P	TRANS	181104-3		09/07/89					
12T1P	TRANS	178145-1	04/29/87	05/12/87	12/12/89	468	156,240	2,812,320	B
13.2T1P	TRANS	180403-1	06/15/88	06/15/88	09/11/89	468	3,960,500	71,289,000	B
13.2T2P	TRANS	184139-2	08/26/89	10/02/89		468			B
				11/01/89					
15T1	TRANS	180068-1	04/20/88	05/22/88	05/26/89	468	1,348,500	24,273,000	B
15T2	TRANS	182634-2	04/21/89			468			B
16.7T1P	TRANS	180276-1	05/25/88	06/20/88	08/26/89	468	3,029,308	54,527,400	B
16.7T2P	TRANS	183876-2	08/09/89	08/23/89		468			B
17.5T1P	TRANS	178453-1	07/08/87	08/18/87	12/14/89	468	367,500	6,615,000	B
20.5T1P	TRANS	180748-1	08/10/88	10/19/89					
21T1P	TRANS	180499-1	06/30/88	11/16/89					
31T1	TRANS	184370-1	09/22/89			468			B

BEP UPDATE—Table shows all new data (printed bold) on PNCs in the latest BEP plate-activity report through Dec. 31, 1989.

That view was advanced by Ken Lawrence, long an advocate of the idea that one should not take BEP reports too literally because of the profusion of errors they contain.

It now turns out that Lawrence was correct. Some plates that had been assigned (manufactured) as 20-row plates had been reported to have contained only 18 rows when they were sent to press.

While it is possible (though unlikely) for a plate to become narrower, it is totally impossible for it to become wider.

Now we learn that those 18-row plates grew back to 20 rows when the plates were canceled.

This leads to agreement with Lawrence's conclusion that the whole thing was just a bunch of typographical errors.

No more Optiforma?

New offset plates have been assigned, but all were made for the D Press through December 1989. This seems to indicate that BEP has given up on using Optiforma product for this complex printing job.

But from the daily production reports obtained by Rich Nazar under his Freedom of Information Act request, we know of a Honeybee printing on Sept. 19, 1989, on the C Press.

This gives rise to the suspicion that some Optiforma product was still in pro-

duction in 1989. The BEP report shows only D Press offset plates.

Nazar's reports show that Optiforma product was fed to the C Press on Sept. 19, 1989. We do not know when the Optiforma printing took place. We do know it did not take place that week because Nazar was not sent a report on the Optiforma Press because it was not in use that week.

What's ahead?

The Plate Number Coil Study Group has had to give up one Honeybee project.

We had attempted to work out press runs by comparing impression figures and carrying over some excesses on a given plate to another press run.

This might have worked if we had complete BEP reports. Unfortunately, with BEP reporting some data "unavailable" (on D Press Process Yellow 5 with 20 rows, for example), the mathematical exercise becomes impossible.

We will, however, continue to provide as much information as possible on each and every offset plate.

Meanwhile, our data on intaglio plates, has been filled in a hair by the cancellation of Plates 1 and 2 and a hint that more Honeybees were printed from another intaglio plate. We look forward to the first reports of that new Honeybee plate number. Stay alert. □

A. Optiforma plates, 18 rows wide

COLOR	SUFFIX PLATE	ASSIGNED	TO PRESS	CANCELED	IMPRESS.	NOTES
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Set A6. Entire press run produced no stamps.

Magenta	06	180390-6	Jun 14, 1988	Oct 21, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Process Yellow	06	180391-6	Jun 14, 1988	Oct 21, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
PMS Yellow	08	180446-8	Jun 22, 1988	Oct 21, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Cyan	06	180389-6	Jun 14, 1988	Oct 21, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Black	10	180440-10	Jun 21, 1988	Oct 21, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	NONE

Data too sketchy to calculate press runs or impressions.

Cyan	07	180436-7	Jun 20, 1988	Jun 24, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	52,610
Cyan	08	180568-8	Jul 11, 1988	Jul 18, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	560,920
Cyan	09	180594-9	Jul 18, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Cyan	10	181110-10	Oct 20, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Magenta	07	180437-7	Jun 20, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Magenta	08	180569-8	Jul 11, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Process Yellow	05	180320-5	Jun 1, 1988	Jun 20, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	1,092,650
PMS Yellow	07	180438-7	Jun 20, 1988	Jul 11, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
PMS Yellow	09	180570-9	Jul 11, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Black	09	180394-9	Jun 14, 1988	Jul 20, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	461,880
Black	11	181109-11	Oct 20, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE

B. Optiforma plates, 20 rows wide.

Cyan	06	180683-6	Aug 4, 1988	Sep 19, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	43,450
Cyan	08	180783-8	Aug 16, 1988	Aug 18, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	962,010 Assigned as 500; To press as 450; Canceled as 500
Cyan	09	180789-9	Aug 18, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Cyan	10	180910-10	Sep 14, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Magenta	01	180534-1	Jul 8, 1988	Jul 11, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	710,800 Listed in Set B1 in January TPN
Magenta	05	180669-5	Aug 2, 1988	Aug 15, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	1,261,780 Assigned as 500; To press as 450; Canceled as 500
Magenta	06	180797-6	Aug 22, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Magenta	07	180798-7	Aug 22, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Process Yellow	03	180632-3	Jul 25, 1988	Jul 26, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	1,693,720
?? Yellow	04	180666-4	Aug 2, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE Probably Process yellow
?? Yellow	05	180670-5	Aug 2, 1988	Aug 15, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	650,900 Assigned as 500; To press as 450; Canceled as 500. (Probably Process yellow)
PMS Yellow	02	180541-2	Jul 8, 1988	Sep 14, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	1,693,720
PMS Yellow	03	180633-3	Jul 25, 1988	Aug 15, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	1,028,700 Assigned as 500; To press as 450; Canceled as 500
PMS Yellow	04	180796-4	Aug 22, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
PMS Yellow	05	180893-5	Sep 14, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
?? Yellow	06	180799-6	Aug 22, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Black	04	180667-4	Aug 2, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Black	07	180794-7	Aug 17, 1988	Aug 23, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	650,900 Assigned as 500; To press as 450; Canceled as 500
Black	08	180800-8	Aug 22, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE
Black	09	180801-9	Aug 22, 1988	NEVER	Jun 22, 1989	NONE

E. D Press offset plates, 20 rows wide

Cyan	13	182703-13	May 1, 1989			
Cyan	14	182798-14	May 10, 1989			
Cyan	15	182810-15	May 11, 1989			
Magenta	04	181140-4	Oct 26, 1988	Nov 1, 1988	Jun 22, 1989	107,500
Red	15	182786-15	May 10, 1989			BEP said plate red, not magenta
Red	16	182797-16	May 10, 1989			BEP said plate red, not magenta
Red	17	182807-17	May 11, 1989			BEP said plate red, not magenta
Process Yellow	05	181141-5	Oct 26, 1988		Jun 22, 1989	Data unavailable on Impressions or To press
Process Yellow	13	182796-13	May 10, 1989			
Process Yellow	14	182808-14	May 11, 1989			
PMS Yellow	13	182780-13	May 9, 1989			
PMS Yellow	14	182781-14	May 9, 1989			
PMS Yellow	15	182795-15	May 10, 1989			
PMS Yellow	16	182806-16	May 11, 1989			
PMS Yellow	17	182809-17	May 11, 1989			
PMS Yellow	18	182812-18	May 11, 1989			
Black	21	182701-21	May 1, 1989			
Black	22	182702-22	May 1, 1989			
Black	23	182799-23	May 10, 1989			
Black	24	182811-24	May 11, 1989			

Honeybee intaglio plates

CAT	PLATE	ASSIGNED	TO PRESS	CANCELED	IMPRESS.	SUBJ.	Max. PNCs	NOTES
25M1	180014-1	04/14/88	05/13/88	06/21/89	3,085,769	432	55,543,842	C Press 18
25M2	180527-2	07/06/88	07/20/88	05/25/89	3,044,712	480	60,894,240	D Press 20
25M3	180935-3	09/23/88	09/29/88	11/01/88	NONE	432	NONE	D Press 20
25M4	182479-4	04/04/89				480		D Press 20
25M5	182731-5	05/03/88				480		D Press 20
25M6	180967-6	09/29/88				432		D Press 18

Notes: Plate 5 is a new plate. Cancellation data new for Plates 1 and 2.

New BEP mysteries include 19-row plate, tagging color

A special tour through BEP by an elite group of BIA members attending NAP-EX allowed peeks at the C and D presses and the Goebel coiling equipment.

At the C Press, a supervisor whose name was Sussex, explained how 18-, 19-, and 20-row printings of Yosemite Flag stamps are made.

The 18-row printing takes place on paper that is 18½ inches wide and has marginal markings at the top and bottom; it is handled by the Huck coiler, which the visitors were not shown. The Huck lines up stamps by the selva markings.

The 20-row printing uses paper 20½ inches wide and has the same marginal markings although it is handled by the Goebel coiler, which does not need the selva markings for registration. It uses the stamp image to do so.

The 19-row stamps use the narrow paper but a 20-row plate, with one row not printed. To do this, a cut-down fiber roller is used but the same inking-in roller and sleeve as for a 20-row printing.

The fiber roller is an impression roller and applies 20 tons of pressure. It has nothing to do with tagging, so a theory expressed here that it may be the source of screening in tagging has to be discarded as wrong.

BEP has been asked for details on 19-row printing.

Charles Teschemacher took out his UV light after he received the new *PNC Catalog* to examine his stamps.

While looking at strips from Plate 13 of the 25¢ Yosemite, Teschemacher noticed that they seemed to luminesce in a different color than other phosphored Yosemite. The tagging seemed a greener color, a sort of lime yellow. Other strips were a grayish blue-green.

What Teschemacher found had been previously noticed by Ken Lawrence, but Lawrence had only a single copy, so he was not certain that what he saw was constant.

Teschemacher speculated that the greener strips just had more phosphor.

It now turns out that on Plate 8, both types of tagging may be found.

All reports from readers are always most welcome. □

Indispensable:

Ken Lawrence's handbook on PNCs becomes our hobby's encyclopedia

By Stephen G. Esrati

Linn's *Plate Number Coil Handbook*, by Ken Lawrence, *Linn's Stamp News*, Sidney, Ohio. 354 pages. \$14.95 soft cover; \$30 library edition.

Make no mistake about it. Ken Lawrence's book, planned when Lawrence was still writing the PNC column for *Stamp Collector*, is absolutely indispensable to every PNC collector.

The approach used is chronological for all coil stamps issued since 1981, whether they bear numbers or not. Here, in extensive detail, are facts about each stamp's postal and philatelic history. This includes not only the dry-bones facts from Postal Service handouts, the statistical data from flawed BEP reports, but also the background of first-day covers, postal need and public usage, the controversies over questionable FDCs, even the people (this reviewer included) who put life into PNCs.

The book, however, has two weaknesses. Many of the pictures simply do not show what Lawrence wanted them to illustrate. This, of course, is not Lawrence's fault. But here's a case in point. Page 95 shows a strip of five of Plate 3 of the 2¢ Locomotive. The caption says it shows the "Smoking t" variety. There's not a trace of the variety in the picture. Perhaps it might have been visible if a single stamp had been photographed instead.

The other weakness, however, may be attributed to Lawrence himself. As may have been apparent when Lawrence succeeded me as *Linn's* PNC writer, our interests are dissimilar. Lawrence is more interested in postal history, usage, and FDCs than I am. His book clearly demonstrates his interests by omitting things in which he appears not to be interested.

One aspect of PNC collecting that is almost entirely missing is the collection of PNC coil labels. Despite a detailed discussion of the two papers used for the 25¢ Yosemite, no mention is made of the labels that identify the phosphored stamps with a "P."

Mentioned only in a few cases where the subject was unavoidable, as on the Yosemite and the 18¢ Washington Monument stamps, is stamp paper.

In fact, the discussion of paper in regard to the 18M stamps is incomplete. Mentioned are the original British and Canadian papers; unmentioned entirely are the dry-gum papers used on stamps bearing the cylinder numbers 33333 and 43444.

[Lawrence explained this shortcoming as being dictated by the difficulties inherent in writing current philatelic history. The galleys on these 1985 stamps were "closed" when the new paper was found in 1988 and *Linn's*, in a monumental effort to get the book into production, prevented Lawrence from amending and revising "closed" material.]

Mentioned where Lawrence had a story to tell, as in Frank Marrelli's finding of the "Railroad Tracks" on 21T1P, are constant plate varieties. But don't expect Lawrence's book to be authoritative on varieties, which he deprecates in referring to the founders of the Plate Number Coil Study Group as having "a zeal for flyspeck varieties" because we started as collectors of the West German Building Series of 1948.

[The first PNC "flyspeck" I heard of was the *Linn's* report that a "major plate crack" had been found on the 4.9¢ Buckboard. *Linn's* called it a "buggy whip." It was not even mentioned in the 1985 *Catalog of Plate Number Coils*.]

Lawrence's aversion to varieties means his book won't explain the mysterious line across several rows of the 21.1M stamp, nor mention the three-row crack on 3T1X. Flyspecks?

This handbook is indispensable. It presents the first compilation of quantities actually shipped (data that allowed the addition of "Total PNCs" to the 1990 *Plate Number Coil Catalog*). It lists sizes of rolls in which each PNC was available, although this is sadly not broken down by plate number.

Also completely new is a postal rate table to beat all postal rate tables. Again, this reflects Lawrence's interest in postal history, specifically in false frankings to meet rates not seen on the stamps.

Here's an example to illustrate the point.

Lawrence cites the current 24.1¢ rate for large, unsorted, first-class mailings in which the address includes a nine-digit ZIP code. The first stamp to meet that rate was 21.1M1P, which could be used as an authorized false franking until Oct. 9, 1988, about six months after the new rate began. Oct. 9, incidentally, left a short gap, because 24.1T1P was not issued until Oct. 26.

The table is enormously helpful to cover collectors who try to understand or describe frankings.

Linn's handbook broke a rule at *Linn's*. It was published in an edition of 4,000, according to Michael Laurence, the publisher and editor of *Linn's*. Normally, *Linn's* publishes nothing unless it is expected to sell at least 5,000 copies.

Early sales, not counting NAPEX, were in excess of 1,300, Laurence said, the hottest-selling item *Linn's* has ever published.

The small printing poses the question raised when *Linn's* reported that 32.6% of its readers collect PNCs. If some 25,000 readers collect PNCs, a larger printing would have been safe. Apparently, even Amos Press is not convinced of the accuracy of its pollsters' finding on PNC collecting.

Laurence said this year's poll of readers found a higher percentage of readers collecting PNCs, "something around 36%."

Richard J. Nazar, a contributing editor to the *PNC Catalog*, often urges me to include yet another new collecting interest on the theory that the catalog should be an encyclopedia of PNCs. If the material does not lend itself to the sort of shorthand employed in a catalog, it is sometimes impossible to meet his requests. But Lawrence, with a different goal, faced no such limitation, so what has come forth is a concise, encyclopedic work on almost every aspect of PNCs.

Lawrence's skills at fact-checking also came into play so that every fact in the book was either dug up by Lawrence or checked by him to make sure of its accuracy.

Some of the book is just plain good reading, as when Lawrence tried to pin down the former owner of the House of Farnam about the provenance of some highly suspicious FDCs that were almost certainly backdated.

Some of the information has been around quite a while, but this is the first time it is all inside one set of covers.

Making the book even more useful is a very good index, broken down into several parts, that allow collectors to look up specific things.

Lawrence also had the benefit of the vast resources of Amos Press, including the ability to print on slick paper with finely screened photographs, which make *Linn's Plate Number Coil Handbook* an absolute must for every PNC collector. □

25¢ Flag over Yosemite

Roll sizes (preliminary)

Plate	Key	Plate	Key	Plate	Key	Key to roll size
1	B	5	A	8i	A,B*	A Rolls of 100
1i	B*, C*	5	A	9	—	B Rolls of 500
2	—	5i	—	9i	A	C Rolls of 3,000
2i	B,C,D	6	A	10i	A	D Rolls of 10,000
3	B	7	—	11i	A	i Phosphored
3i	B*,D	7i	A	13i	A	* "P" on label
4	B	8	B	14i	—	— Unreported

New reports on Yosemite

Plate 1, on phosphored paper, was issued in rolls of 500 (reported by Cuniberti) and 3,000 (reported by Dr. Rabinowitz). The 500 rolls have a new label in which the "500" is larger but the "P" is smaller. The "P" is under the "PS" in "USPS" and is perpendicular to "USPS."

Reports are urgently requested from any reader who might be able to fill in the gaps in the table above where dashes indicate that no information has been reported.

An illustration of the label for a roll of 500 with the smaller "500" and the crooked "P" may be found on Page 54, Appendix A, of the 1990 *Plate Number Coil Catalog*.

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Some time during July 1990, after the aforesaid supplements will have become available in North America, the complete sets of album PAGES, too, will be up-dated to include the new pages and will thereafter be supplied as follows:

PNC Sets of Pages	Period	No. of Pages	Regular Pages without mounts	SF-Hingeless Pages with mounts
PNC STRIPS PS 3/PS 5/PS 7 (Regulars & Precancels) Part 1: COTTRELL Press/Joint line/Reg. overall tagged Part 2: Other presses/No joint line/Reg. block tagged	1981/85 1981/89	62 40	— —	53 PNC/1 SF US \$ 170.00 53 PNC/2 SF US \$ 111.00
PNC SINGLES (Regulars & Precancels) Part I: COTTRELL Press/Joint line/Reg. overall tagged Part II: Other presses/No joint line/Reg. block tagged	1981/85 1981/88	13 14	53 CS/I US \$ 20.00 53 CS/II US \$ 21.50	53 CS/I SF US \$ 39.00 53 CS/II SF US \$ 42.00
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SLIP CASE			KA-red US \$ 24.00	

It's a matter of personal preference whether to choose a PERFECT or an EXCELLENT binder. In view of the lengths of particularly the PS 7 mounts, the editors feel inclined to recommend the DE-red binder for items No. 53 PNC/1 & 2 SF, since the pages are getting bent less when being turned over.

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Paper types

By Kim Cuniberti

Since the first of the year, Richard Nazar and I (along with several other paper-type enthusiasts: Scott Adams and Scott Smith to name but two) have continued to add to our repertoire of identification tests. In the process we uncovered a previously overlooked earlier appearance of Type III paper.

Most of the recent material has been held out of the 1990 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* pending further research. Rich and I would love to get any and all feedback, pro or con, on the new techniques described below or on any new ones we have not yet discovered.

We really can use all the results from the sampling of other PNC material to confirm or deny what we have done so far. So please let us know what you discover by looking through your own collection. If you can go beyond that, GREAT!

As you may recall, Ken Lawrence and others had pointed out the shortfalls of examining the gum to identify paper type, particularly for collectors of used stamps without gum or on cover. At that time, long-wave UV offered the only alternative identification method; but in some instances the characteristic differences can be so subtle that an additional means of confirming the paper type was needed.

We have definitely added such additional means, although it is not certain that they are useful for used stamps.

Testing the pH

A simple liquid applicator, not unlike a pen, works great to prove Type II paper, the only acidic paper in the Transportation Series.

Type III is alkaline, as is Type I, but there does not seem to be a measurable difference between them, although some of the earlier Type I fractionals gave a weaker basic reaction than all the other Type I and Type III.

The obvious drawback in testing the pH (a measure of alkalinity or acidity) is that it would be impractical for used singles or for stamps on cover because the test marks are permanent.

The best part of the pH test is that it does provide a foolproof test for Type II stamps to separate them from Type I or Type III stamps in which the appearance under UV is too similar.

To do this test one needs either a stamp

from scrap (the stamps between plate numbers that we do not collect) or a strip we can shorten or sacrifice. This test is not recommended for use by individual collectors, but it does prove to the researcher that the paper types have differences that can be detected by objective methods.

The result of the test is a change of color where the testing solution is applied.

The pH applicator pen

[The following section was written by Dr. David L. Dauplaise, manager of Research and Technical Service of the Paper Chemicals Department at Stamford (Conn.) Research Laboratories of American Cyanamid Corp.]

The pH applicator functions on the following principle. The pen is filled with a pH indicator solution which is chlorophenol red. Applying this indicator to the surface of the stamp causes a yellow line to form if the pH is 6.0 or below; a purple line is formed if the pH is 6.7 or above.

Caution should be exercised when doing this test because any surface coating could give the initial reading. Further rubbing with the applicator pen usually exposes the interior of the paper and its pH can then be determined.

The variation in the paper's pH results from the use of alkaline or acid papermaking processes. Traditionally, most fine paper in the United States was made under acid conditions (pH 4.0–5.5). More recently, much of the fine paper production in the United States is shifting to alkaline papermaking.

The chemical difference in paper pH results from the fact that stamps made under acid conditions are filled with clay and titanium dioxide and the ambient pH is 4.0–5.5. Stamps made under alkaline conditions are filled with calcium carbonate (chalk) which buffers the paper pH to about 7.5–8.0.

There are many advantages to alkaline paper. It is stronger, less subject to yellowing, and often whiter than conventional acid paper. However, the real impetus to the production of alkaline paper is that it is economically attractive for paper companies.

Alkaline paper can have a higher level of filler (calcium carbonate), which is less expensive than fiber, thus substitution of filler for fiber produces a better quality product at a lower cost.

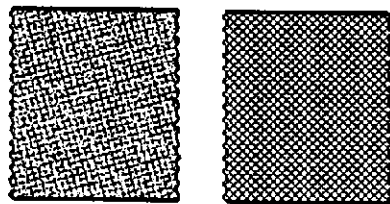
- 2 new ways to test
- New Type IIIa
- New plea for help

Backlighting

Backlighting has proven to be very reliable, but Rich and I are still gathering data.

By exposing the gum side of a stamp to a bright light (sunlight is very effective) and viewing it from the face in such a way as to prevent the light from shining into your eyes, various textures can be observed that can isolate each paper type.

Type II, once again, is the stellar



Type I—Criss-cross at 20-degree angle.

Type II—Criss-cross at 45-degree angle.

performer. The test worked with every example from my stock and at the stamp shows where I was able to try it out.

This diagonal criss-cross pattern appears grayish in contrast to the rest of the stamp, which is whiter because of the bright light. Some Type II stamps exhibit extremely strong patterns and can be easily seen on a backlit cover.

I do not have enough covers to tell if the cross-hatching can always be seen. Some of the Type II strips in my stock that exhibit a weaker cross-hatching pattern might not be distinguishable if they were on cover.

As mint strips, however, they leave no doubt.

Type III paper, when backlit, shows nothing at all. Each stamp is uniformly white from the brightness of the light.

Type I paper, just to be difficult, has two patterns that Rich and I have observed to date. For the collector of mint strips this is not particularly important because the diagonal gum ridges on Type I stamps keep them from being confused with other paper types. But for the collector of used stamps, the differences may be useful.

Most Type I stamps show the criss-cross pattern seen in the left diagram. Note the different orientation of the pattern when compared to that seen on Type II.

Type I stamps that do not exhibit the

cross-hatching have a cloudy pattern of random whiter or grayer areas instead.

Up to now I have not sampled enough Type I strips to find any consistency as to which pattern one might expect to find on which issue. Using the backlighting technique, a cloudy Type I would probably not be distinguishable from a Type III on cover.

There are several issues that appeared on both Type I and Type III paper, but I have not yet done the research to determine whether the Type I examples of these are criss-crossed or cloudy. Therefore, I do not yet know if this would present a problem in the use of this method of identification. Anyone out there who would like to examine his or her stamps and offer us the results, please join in! (My address is P.O. Box 3654, Danbury CT 06813-3654.)

Cause of texture

[The following section was also written by Dave Dauplaise.]

The texturing found in some of these stamps could be the result of the paper-forming process.

A consistent pattern present in the paper (not the gum) may be formed by the papermaking fabric on which the paper pulp was laid. These marks are further impressed into the paper's surface during the final smoothing, known as calendering.

In calendering, the dry (5% moisture) paper is pressed between smooth stainless steel rolls with considerable pressure. This is the final smoothing before the paper is wound onto a reel.

The wire marks, if that is what they are, may be different on each paper machine, and since the forming fabrics are changed periodically, may even be different from the same machine over time.

There are, of course, other possible causes for these patterns. Any surface coating application or possibly even the equipment that applies the gum could

impart a distinct pattern to the paper surface.

Surface lighting

Briefly, I need also to mention surface lighting, which is done in the same manner as in examining gum texture, but on the face of the stamp. This shows some characteristics that relate directly to the textures seen by backlighting. Type III is smooth and uniform. Type II shows the criss-cross pattern or, sometimes, half the pattern with diagonal ridges as at a 45-degree angle. Type I appears textured to some extent. I have not explored this method as it applies to Type I very much as I have really been focusing on Types II and III. Any volunteers?

Type IIIa paper

That brings me to the appearance of Type IIIa paper.

Frank Parsons Paper Co., Inc., of Landover, Md., held a brief contract to supply 1,134 rolls of LP-40 paper to BEP from July 1985 through November 1985, prior to the contract now being filled by L&CP Corp.

The LP-40 paper that Parsons supplied under this contract was produced by P.H. Glatfelter Co. of Spring Grove, Pa. (a mill/manufacturer) and gummed by Paper Manufacturers Co. (PMC) of Philadelphia (a converter).

Glatfelter currently makes paper for L&CP.

The final products delivered to BEP differ only in the gum. PMC's gum texture is smooth and can be differentiated by this method.

So what issues are on the paper from Parsons with PMC gum?

The first pieces of this puzzle were sent to me from upstate New York by Scott Adams, a precanceled 10.1¢ Oil Wagon from Plate 1 and a 12¢ Stanley Steamer from the Cottrell presses. At first glance, both looked like Type II. But they were not dead under UV as a

normal Type II should be. Also, the gum showed no horizontal striations.

When backlit, Adams' strips show no criss-cross.

Examining Adams' strips, I found that I did have something similar with the gap at 12L/R (which I had erroneously listed as being Type II). Scott Smith in Colorado found that he had one, too, also 12L/R.

When the smoke cleared, Rich and I were able to identify similar paper on some previously classified Type II and Type III varieties:

1T5, 1T6—1¢ Omnibus, Plates 5 and 6, in addition to Type II, not instead of Type II.

6T2P—Plate 2 of the 6¢ Tricycle, Gap 5R.

12.5T1P—Plate 1 of the 12.5¢ Pushcart, with gaps at 12L, 11L, and 10L. All of these are on paper that is dark olive in daylight (dark brown in long-wave UV). The only Type III not from PMC is on light olive paper (bright orange red in UV) and has its gap at 10R.

14T1 and 14T2—Plates 1 and 2 of the 14¢ Iceboat, also in addition to Type II, not instead of.

Are there more? From what we can see from a chronological list of dates to press of issues during that period, it is possible. Many of those issues, however, have been identified to date only on Type I paper, so it would seem unlikely that a smooth-gum example would have gone undetected until now on any of the stamps printed at that time.

Again, if anyone out there would like to contribute any findings, we invite him or her for a loan of eyes and time. Rich and I need all the input we can get. The number of strips we have seen (it is well into the hundreds) is still not very meaningful statistically, but is all we can go on for now. □

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TRANSPORTATION COILS



All Strips of 5 (PS/5)	F	VF/XF	XF/5
1897 1¢ Bus 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	.50	.75	1.50
2225 1¢ B Press 1, 2	.50	.75	1.25
1897A Loco 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10	.60	.80	1.50
2225 Loco B Press 1	.50	.75	1.25
1898 Handcar 1, 2, 3, 4	1.00	1.25	1.50
2252 Conestoga Wagon 1	.80	.90	1.00
2123 3.4¢ School Bus 1, 2	1.25	1.50	2.00
2123a 3.4¢ PC 1, 2	1.50	1.75	3.00
1898A 4¢ Coach 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1.75	2.00	4.00
1898Ab 4¢ PC 3, 4	1.75	2.00	4.00
5, 6	1.85	2.00	4.00
2228 4¢ B Press 1	1.00	1.50	2.00
2124 4.9¢ Buckboard 3, 4	1.00	1.30	2.00
2124a PC 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1.50	2.00	3.00
1899 5¢ Motorcycle 1, 2, 3, 4	.90	1.50	2.00
2253 5¢ Milk Wagon 1	.95	1.50	2.00
1900 5.2¢ Sleigh 1, 2	13.00	15.00	20.00
3	96.00	120.00	140.00
5	91.00	115.00	135.00
1900a 5.2¢ PC 1, 2, 3, 5	10.00	12.00	14.00
PC 4, 6	12.00	14.00	16.00
2254 5.3¢ Elevator 1	1.10	1.50	2.00
2125 5.5¢ Star Truck 1	1.10	1.50	2.00
2125a 5.5¢ PC 1, 2	2.25	3.00	4.00
1901 5.9¢ Bicycle 3, 4	16.00	20.00	22.00
1901a 5.9¢ PC 3, 4	15.00	17.00	20.00
PC 5, 6	60.00	70.00	100.00
2126 6¢ Tricycle 1	1.30	1.40	1.50
2126a PC 1	2.00	2.25	3.00
PC 2	5.00	6.00	8.00
2127 7.1¢ Tractor 1	2.00	2.50	3.00
2127a PC 1	2.00	2.50	3.00
NEW PC 1	2.00	2.50	3.00
1902 7.4¢ Baby Buggy 2	12.00	14.00	16.00
1902a PC 2	3.50	4.00	7.00
2255 7.6¢ Carreta 1, 2, 3	2.50	3.00	4.00
2128 8.3¢ Ambulance 1, 2	1.75	2.00	2.50
2128a 8.3¢ PC 1, 2	1.50	2.00	3.00
PC 3, 4	3.50	4.00	5.00
2231 Amb. B Press 1, 2	2.20	3.50	4.50
2256 Wheelchair 1, 2	2.50	3.50	4.00
2129 8.5¢ Tow Truck 1	2.50	3.00	4.00
2129a 8.5¢ PC 1, 2	2.50	3.00	4.00
1903 9.3¢ Mail Wagon 1, 2	14.00	16.00	20.00
3, 4	32.00	40.00	45.00
5, 6	250.00	300.00	375.00
1903a 9.3¢ PC 1, 2	15.00	17.00	20.00
PC 3, 4	20.00	27.00	28.00
PC 5, 6	4.00	5.00	7.00
PC 8	120.00	140.00	160.00
2257 10¢ Canal Boat 1	2.00	2.50	4.00
2130 10.1¢ Oil Wagon 1	2.50	3.00	3.50
2130a 10.1¢ PC 1, 2	3.00	4.00	4.50
2130 Red overprint 2, 3	3.00	4.00	4.50
1904 10.9¢ Hansom Cab 1, 2	35.00	40.00	45.00
1904a 10.9¢ PC 1, 2	25.00	29.00	35.00
PC 3, 4	325.00	390.00	450.00
1905 11¢ Caboose 1	4.00	4.50	5.00
1905a 11¢ PC 1	3.40	3.50	3.75
2131 11¢ Stutz 1, 2, 3, 4	2.00	2.25	2.50
2132 12¢ Steamer 1, 2	2.25	2.75	4.00
2132a 12¢ PC 1, 2	2.50	3.50	4.00
B Press PC 1	7.00	10.00	12.00
2133 12.5¢ Pushcart 1	2.50	3.00	4.50
2133a 12.5¢ PC 1, 2	3.50	4.00	4.75
2258 13¢ Patrol Wagon 1	2.60	3.00	3.50
2259 13.2¢ Coal Car 1	2.60	3.00	3.50
2134 14¢ Iceboat 1, 2, 3, 4	1.70	2.40	3.45
B Press 2	2.00	2.65	3.60
2260 15¢ Tugboat 1	2.60	3.00	3.40
2261 16.7¢ Popcorn 1, 2	3.00	3.50	4.00
1906 17¢ Auto 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3.00	4.00	5.00
6	15.50	20.00	25.00
7	5.50	7.00	12.00

All Strips of 5 (PS/5)	F	VF/XF	XF/5
1906a 17¢ PC Type A 3, 4, 5	5.00	6.00	8.00
Type A 6	11.00	13.00	15.50
Type A 7	11.00	13.50	15.00
Type AB 5, 7 PS10 only	15.00	17.00	20.00
Type B 3, 4	25.00	30.00	40.00
Type B 5, 6	10.00	12.00	14.00
Type BA 5, 6	40.00	50.00	60.00
Type C 1, 2	7.50	12.00	17.00
Type C 3, 4	10.00	12.00	14.00
Type C 5, 7	20.00	25.00	30.00
2135 17¢ Dogsled 2	2.75	3.30	3.85
2262 17.5¢ Racer 1	4.50	5.00	6.00
2262a 17.5¢ PC 1	4.50	5.00	6.00
1907 18¢ Surrey 1	69.00	79.00	97.00
2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10	4.00	5.00	6.00
3, 4, 7	45.00	54.00	60.00
11, 12	9.50	11.00	12.50
13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18	6.00	7.00	8.00
1891 18¢ Flag 1	400.00	500.00	600.00
2	32.00	38.50	45.00
3	735.00	950.00	1,150.00
4	9.00	11.00	14.00
5	5.00	6.00	8.00
6	WANT	WANT	WANT
6 (PS/3 only)	1.200	—	—
7	25.00	30.00	35.00
2149 18¢ Wash. 1112, 3333	3.00	4.00	5.00
2149A 18¢ PC 33333	3.00	4.00	5.00
PC 11121, 43444	5.00	6.00	8.00
1908 20¢ Pumper 1	130.00	160.00	195.00
2	900.00	1,075.00	1,275.00
3, 4, 13, 15, 16	5.00	6.00	8.00
5, 9, 10	3.00	4.00	5.00
7, 8	95.00	120.00	140.00
6, 12, 14	7.00	15.00	25.00
11	50.00	65.00	80.00
2005 Consumer 1, 2	160.00	190.00	200.00
3, 4	130.00	140.00	160.00

All Strips of 5 (PS/5)	F	VF/XF	XF/5
1895 20¢ Flag 1	70.00	80.00	100.00
2, 11	12.00	13.00	16.00
3, 12	7.25	8.50	9.75
4	—	WANT	WANT
6	77.00	90.00	105.00
5, 9, 10, 13, 14	6.50	7.75	8.75
8	20.00	24.00	30.00
1895a 20¢ PC 14	18.00	21.00	25.00
0135 20¢ Official 1	30.00	40.00	60.00
2263 20¢ Cable Car 1, 2	3.50	4.00	4.50
2264 20.5¢ Fire Engine 1	3.50	4.00	4.50
2265 21¢ Rail Car 1, 2	3.50	4.00	4.50
2150 21.1¢ 111111	4.00	5.00	6.00
111121	5.00	5.50	6.50
2150a 21.1¢ PC 111111	4.00	5.00	6.00
PC 111121	5.00	5.50	6.50
2115 22¢ Flag 1, 7, 14	13.50	16.00	19.00
3	40.00	50.00	60.00
6, 11, 13, 17, 20	8.00	10.00	12.00
2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, T1	4.00	5.00	6.00
2112 22¢ "D" Eagle 1, 2	6.00	7.00	10.00
0139 22¢ "D" Official 1	60.00	70.00	90.00
2266 24.1¢ Tandem 1	4.00	4.75	5.00
2136 25¢ Bread Wagon	—	—	—
1, 2, 4	3.50	4.00	5.50
3, 5	4.00	4.50	6.00
2280 25¢ Yosemite Block Tag	—	—	—
1-5, 7, 8	4.50	5.50	7.00
9	8.00	10.00	12.00
2280 25¢ Yosemite Phosphor Tag	—	—	—
1, 2, 3, 5, 7-11, 13, 14	4.50	5.50	7.00
6	24.00	24.50	25.00
2279 "E" Earth 1111, 1222	3.50	4.00	4.50
1211, 2222	5.50	6.50	7.25
2281 25¢ Honeybee 1, 2	4.00	5.00	5.50
2468 \$1 Seaplane	9.00	11.00	12.00

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Cottrell gap table draws criticism

By Dr. Robert Rabinowitz

The scarcity table for Cottrell precancel gaps in the 1990 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* is a disappointment with a continuum of inconsistencies.

For example, Plates 5 and 7 of the 17¢ Electric Auto in precancel style AB and with the gap at 4R is listed as a "D," the next to the rarest scarcity designation. "D" is defined as "Scarce. Never many copies known; few if any now available." Hasn't anyone wondered why such a pair of rare strips has a net retail price of about \$25? I'll bet I can find more than 50 sets in dealers' hands.

[*Editor's note:* I agree. The catalog gives an asterisk to strips with the gap at 4R, meaning that those strips averaged out at more than double the price for strips with the gap at 5R. The latter is priced in the catalog at \$22.50 for Plate 5 and \$20 for Plate 7. Dr. Rabinowitz' own most recent price for these strips in F-VF condition was \$35.]

On the other hand, the last AB type to be discovered was on Plates 3 and 4 with the gap at 5R, and most of those had cut numbers. While there are many fewer of these available in any quality and while the whole-number version carries a retail price close to 10 times that of the "D"-rated 5/7 AB 4R, the scarcity table provides a lower "C-D" rating. Can anyone explain this?

The last Cottrell gap to be discovered in rolls was Michael B. Lipson's find of the 12¢ Stanley Steamer, Plates 1 and 2, with the gap at 3L. After his discovery of one roll of 3,000 in a Virginia post office, an undisclosed quantity of additional rolls with this gap was found nearby by Diane Thompson. The "C-D" scarcity rating for these is accompanied by an accompanying statement: "Very hard to find. Quantities unknown." These strips retail at about \$30 each.

[*Editor's note:* Lipson did not have these in his Jan. 4, 1990, price list. Dr. Rabinowitz' most recent price for F-VF was \$32. He said he is able to find all he needs at prices that allow him a profit.]

On the other hand, as far as I know only one roll of 3,000 was ever discovered of the 8.3¢ Ambulance, Plates 1 and 2, with the gap at 2R. That roll was found in 1985, before its uniqueness was recognized. Much of it was broken down into strips of five with much of the F-VF material sold as generic strips. The demand for the few remaining 2R strips is

particularly strong since it's a set required by the Lighthouse album. It retails at about 10 times the price of the 12¢ 1/2 3L strips. Despite all this, the *PNC Catalog* also lists the 8.3¢ 1/2 2R with a "C-D" scarcity.

[*Editor's note:* The 8.3¢ strips, listed as the only no-gap strip but having a gap at 2R, are given a space in the Lighthouse album that can be filled with strips that do not show the gap. That, would remain true as long as no other gaps are found outside the strip of five. The catalog estimates their price at \$115. Dr. Rabinowitz last priced the no-gap and the Gap 2R strips at \$275, but he is sold out of them.]

The 1990 catalog lists the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon, Plates 3 and 4, with the gap at 3R with a "D?" scarcity. The notation reads: "One recent find. Quantity unknown." I questioned that last year in that collectors were waiting for this gap position and none of the "find" seemed to be coming to market. Nothing has changed in the intervening 12 months, and the "find" may be someone's imagination.

Also, the "C" scarcity for the 9.3¢ 1/2 4L is ridiculous when it is compared to the much more common 9.3¢ 3/4 2R, also given a "C" scarcity rating.

The 10.9¢ Hansom Cab, Plates 1 and 2 with a line gap, has a notation that a "Low entry is known on #2." Some of us refer to this as a "dropped transfer." [*Editor's note:* The terms are synonymous and both should have been used in the catalog.] No such comment is made for the other four gap positions of Plate 2 of the 10.9¢, suggesting to the casual observer that these are unknown. In fact, the low entry is known in every gap position. [*Editor's note:* They are also found on the tagged stamp.]

Kim Cuniberti, who has borne the brunt of the Gap Committee's responsibilities in the absence of committee chairman Larry G. Haynes, knows that low entries exist on other gap positions. I know for a fact that his collection contains them on at least four of the five known gap positions. Why keep this information from catalog users or bury it in ambiguity?

[*Editor's note:* We should have revised these entries.]

There are more inconsistencies, errors, omissions, etc., but there's no point in enumerating them all now. Steve Esrati

and the purchasers of the catalog put their faith in the Gap Committee; I believe that they were let down. □

[*Editor's note:* As indicated in *TPN*, Haynes was unavailable for work on this year's catalog. Cuniberti acted as a pinch-hitter. The scarcity table for Cottrell Press gaps was little changed from that of the 1989 catalog. Tom Maeder has agreed to chair the committee in Haynes' absence for the 1991 catalog, and Dr. Rabinowitz has agreed to serve on the committee, as he did in 1988-89. This article will start the revision process.]

Autopost labels include a stripe for the tagging

Autopost etiquettes that were briefly sold by two machines in Washington and by two in Kensington, Md., include a feature not visible in black-and-white illustrations of these self-adhesives.

(Two additional machines were in use at the Universal Postal Union Congress.)

At the left edge of each label is a 3/8-inch orange stripe printed in a bright orange color. Under visible light, this stripe is shiny. The white paper of the rest of the label is matte.

Under short-wave UV light, the orange stripe reacts like Dayglo orange.

The reason for the stripe should be obvious. It would act like a stamp as the source of luminescent tagging needed to activate postal machinery.

It may make little sense to most people that Autopost labels needed a cancel, since they are much like meters. In fact, USPS is concerned about false dating on meters and on these labels.

The labels could be bought one day and mailed later. Thus the date on the labels would not reflect the date of mailing. So a luminescent stripe activated the facer-canceler.

Why report on all this in *The Plate Number*? To begin with, the labels are printed from coils inside the machines. Secondly, each label carries not a plate number, but a running number, making no two labels alike.

Now that the labels have gone off sale on May 7, they were worth mentioning here. □

Bee found with no yellow

Howard A. Moser has found a sensational color-missing variety on the 25¢ Honeybee in which the PMS yellow background is totally missing.

Collectors over 50 may recall the 1940s commercial:

"I wonder where the yellow went,
"When I brush my teeth with
Pepsodent."

Somebody really did a job with his toothbrush on this one.

How it could have missed rejection is a mystery, since the wings of the bee look transparent. But rumor has it that coil stamps are rarely inspected nowadays, an added reason why there is no select stock available on most recent coils at philatelic boutiques.

Everything else on the yellow-missing stamp appears normal. Moser's find is being forwarded to BEP for examination and explanation by the PNC Study Group.

Intaglio-missing Honeybee is undetected for 11 days

Ellen Mitchell brought two amazing commercial covers to the Plymouth Show, where Midwestern members of PNC³ held a regional meeting April 28.

Both covers were 12- by 9-inch interoffice envelopes mailed by Kelly Girls in Midland, Tex., to Kelly Girls in Detroit. They demonstrate that the Kelly Girl in Texas who mailed the two letters 11 days apart used up some valuable 25¢ Honeybees without being aware of it.

Cover 1 was mailed Jan. 6, 1990. It required 65 cents in postage as a three-ounce letter. The rate was met by a 25¢ Honeybee missing the black intaglio and by a pair of 20¢ Flags, showing the plate number 9.

The second cover, dated Jan. 17, needed only 45 cents and had one, no-number Flag in addition to the Honeybee stamp that was missing its Honeybee.

...but are they really rare?

Greenwood thinks not

Dr. John Greenwood, the PNC Study Group's authority on imperfs, thinks something funny is going on with intaglio-missing Honeybees. At one recent stamp show he found many dealers

**All the PNC news
that fits we print**

hawking this item, all at about the same price.

"I think there are many more of these around than anyone will let on," he said. "But that does not apply to Honeybees with offset colors missing. I only found one of those being offered at the show, a black-missing, without 'USA' or the denomination."

Maeder resigns as editor of PNC³ publication

The May issue of *Coil Line* reported the resignation as editor of Tom Maeder, saying that Maeder had "hit the wall."

In fact, *Coil Line* was taking up 10 days of Maeder's spare time every month. Maeder, a high school teacher, and his wife, Stacey, also have small children and teen-agers to worry about.

The decision to resign came many months ago when PNC³ was thinking of mailing *Coil Line* at bulk rates.

"No way," Maeder told *TPN*. "It's bad enough now, but can you imagine what it would be like if I had to sort and bundle up the newsletter for the Postal Service, too?"

Replacing Maeder as editor is Harold Brown, a professional journalist in Bowling Green, Ohio. Another part of Maeder's job is being taken over by Alan Thomson of Northwood, N.H., who is being made responsible for having the newsletter printed and mailed.

Starting with the June issue, the newsletter was mailed bulk rate.

Ortegon wins a 9.3T8P, but gap isn't as described

Coil Line in its April issue listed the lots for the third PNC³ auction. Lot 141 was described as a strip of five of 9.3T8P, Plate 8 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon, in extra fine condition.

What made this lot unusual was that it was described as having the gap at 2 Right.

Until this auction lot was described in *Coil Line*, the only known gap on 9.3T8P was at 2L.

The winning bidder, Dr. Pedro

Ortegon, has informed *TPN* that it was all a typographical error. But he got a nice item for just \$70. The 1990 catalog price for a VF strip is \$130.

Lindemuth and Dr. Agris win awards for coil exhibits

Tim Lindemuth won the reserve grand award at CenepeX, the Central Nebraska Stamp Club show in March, with his showing of 20¢ Flag PNCs. He also won the Transmississippi Philatelic Society's gold medal and a gold award from CenepeX. Then Lindemuth sent the same exhibit to Okpex in Oklahoma City in April and won a gold, the Bureau Issues Association's Statue of Freedom and an APS award.

Dr. Joseph Agris won a gold and an APS Medal of Excellence at Interpex '90 in New York in March, but not for his PNCs. He showed the private vending and affixing machines companies and their private perforations.

Later, Dr. Agris won a gold and an APS medal for the same exhibit at Okpex. At that show he also won a silver for his coil waste exhibit.

Philatelic Sales Division: pillar of the caveman set

Now that the Philatelic Sales Division has moved out of Merrifield, Va., to a cave in Missouri, the return address is a thing of beauty, something one must behold to believe:

"8300 NE Underground Drive, Pillar 210."

Some of us are driven from pillar to post by the complexities of life, others like to refer to upright people as pillars of their communities, but a pillar in a return address?

Come now, USPS, there must be a way to make that cave more people-friendly. Why not start by changing the address system?

Norton asks DeSpain to do Seaplane cachets

Bill Norton, the FDC dealer in Little Rock, commissioned Richard DeSpain to color and sign 105 \$1 Seaplane FDCs. Norton's price for the five covers with a numbered strip of five was \$19.50 each.

Denson recalls why USPS took numbers off officials

Allowing collectors to buy a strip of five to get a plate number of the \$1 Seaplane will result in mountains of scrap postage on the floors of philatelic counters and at Pillar 210 in the cave.

This reminded Ed Denson of the reason the Postal Service stopped putting plate numbers on official stamps after the (22¢) "D" Official.

This is Denson's recollection of what happened:

"Mike Courtney, a California PNC collector, ordered 100 mint singles of the 20¢ Official. The boys in Washington stripped them out for him and he returned 60 or so because they didn't suit him. Washington replaced the 60 free.

"I'm not sure, but I think he did the same thing on the 'D' Official.

"Then Mike got all those stamps favor canceled and, of course, built up a mountain of scrap."

Lenzes, Keydel, Trinks work hard, reap fruits

A handful of hard-working people can

make miracles happen. Joann and Kurt Lenz, Conrad Keydel, and Gene Trinks, dreamed up the idea of a regional meeting of PNC's at Detroit's Plymouth Show and saw it come to fruition in record time. It was the first Midwestern gathering of PNC collectors since the Plate Number Coil Study Group met at Ameripex in Chicago..

In addition to the APS slide show on PNCs (usually quite hard to get) and a raffle of valuable items supplied by the Lenzes, the organizers saw prospects of a regular set of such meetings, possibly expanded with a swap session or two. About 30 people dropped in at the April 28 meeting.

Plating effort is begun on truncated No. 1 Bees

Joann Lenz and Con Keydel are working on an attempt to identify the rows of all truncated Honeybees from Plate 1. One row is easy because it has a clear serif. Another row has a little knob-like thing on top. But that leaves 16 rows to be done and illustrated.

20F4, a rarity of late, sells for \$39 at auction

Just when our last issue said Plate 4 of the 20¢ Flag was disappearing and when the 1990 PNC Catalog estimated its price at an italicized \$500, the March 31 sale by Jacques C. Schiff, Jr., hammered down a strip of five for only \$39. This proves once again that playing roulette at auctions is not necessarily the best way to obtain the best price when you sell. Buy ads in the philatelic press for that strip have been at \$225 or more most of this year, and buy ads are usually below the prevailing market price.

Rare gap position soars as last catalog revision

The last price change made in the 1990 PNC Catalog was on Plate 2 of the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon with the gap at 1R.

Early drafts priced it at \$6.25, up 75 cents from the price in last year's edition. It soared to an italicized \$20.00 because no strips appear to be available.

Another gap position on the same stamp, Gap 1L, carries no price at all, and may soar into triple digits unless supplies are found.

Ditsch finds Plates 1 and 5 scarce on Bread Wagons

Carl Ditsch, who likes to buy mixtures and then break down the PNCs he finds, bought five pounds of mix from Bob's Stamp Room. "This is one of the best mixtures I have come across," Ditsch said, bemoaning the closing down of the firm. (See Page 67 of this issue.)

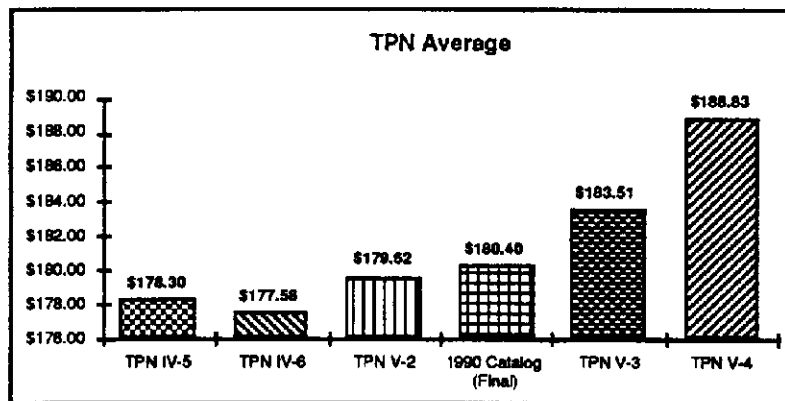
The five pounds yielded 278 PNCs, nothing particularly valuable, but a nice representation of different denominations and plate numbers.

For the record, Ditsch's yield on the 25¢ Bread Wagon out of a total of 45 pounds of mixture was: 19 from Plate 1; 165 from Plate 2; 126 from Plate 3; 105 from Plate 4, but only 4 from Plate 5.

Readers who sort mixtures are invited to report their findings, especially on the 25¢ Yosemite. Please indicate the total number of PNCs found and the total number for each block-tagged and each phosphored plate number.

Names in the news

Steve Esrati has bought Al Haake's remaining stock of PNC plate varieties.... Al Hagen, owner of H&H Stamps, issued a price list in May after a long hiatus. □



TPN Average hits an all-time high

The TPN Average, an index of prices sought by dealers for about 30 PNC strips of five, hit an all-time high in June. In fact, it did so as well in April, but the Shaker Heights editorial staff of TPN, all one of them, was too busy with the 1990 PNC Catalog to notice.

Added into the index this month is a price list from Darrell Yeisley, a veteran dealer who placed his first PNC ad in *Linn's* in June.

The average, with its heavy concentration on PNC blue chips, slightly distorts the market, which has been fairly flat for

several months, except for the continuing price increases for stamps dealers find hard to replace.

Although 18F6, Plate 6 of the 18¢ Flag is not included in the average, there are now five stamps that dealers are selling at more than \$300 for VF.

They are: 18F3 (\$1,050); 20F4 (\$465 when priced, but many dealers are out of stock in strips of five); 10.9T4P-Ln (\$460); and 20T2 (\$1,100). Plate 3 of the 10.9¢ Hansom Cab is not included in the average, but is near its pairing in current price lists. □

Report of constant plate varieties—Part XXVIII

By A.S. Cibulskas

2¢ Locomotive (Cottrell)

a. Plate 4. Additional line parallel to joint line. Constant at 1L. (SAdams)

2¢ Locomotive (B Press)

Note: All are on Plate 1. All are in same row. (SAdams)

a. Dot at bottom right of "8" in date. Constant at 24L.

b. Dot at top left of "L" in "Locomotive." Constant at 11L.

c. Dot below the "S" and "A" of "USA." Constant at 7L.

d. Dot at bottom of first "o" of "Locomotive." Constant at 5L.

e. Dot below "E" of "Locomotive." Constant at 3L.

f. Dot at top left of "t" in "Locomotive." Constant at 2L.

g. Cap on "S" of "USA." Constant at 18R.

h. Dot at bottom right of "2" in denomination. Constant at 24R.

5.3¢ Elevator

a. Horizontal scratch approximately 9mm long. Starts below middle of right front elevator panel and continues into the perforations at right. Constant at 20L. (Anon.)

8.5¢ Tow Truck

Note: All are tagged Plate 1. All are in same row. (SAdams)

a. Hyphen in the top loop of the "s" in date. Constant at 13L.

b. Dot at bottom right of right rear wheel. Constant at 1R.

c. Dot at bottom right of left rear wheel. Constant at 8R.

d. Dot above "2" of date. Constant at 10R.

e. Slash below the "s" of date. Constant at 20R.

10.1¢ Oil Wagon

a. Plate 1, black precancel. The white horizontal line along the body of the wagon is filled in. (Excess ink?) Constant at 2L, 1R, 2R. (SAdams)

13¢ Patrol Wagon

a. Plate 1. Top half of the vertical part of the "L" in "POLICE" is obliterated. Constant at 16R. (Liu)

14¢ Iceboat (B Press)

a. Plate 2. Dot to right of right guide line; about one-third of the way from top of mast. Constant at 16L. (SAdams)

16.7¢ Popcorn Wagon

Note: All from Plate 1. All in same row. (SAdams)

a. Dot below decimal point in denomination. Constant at 21L.

b. Dot below "2" of date. Constant at 3L.

c. Dot above "9" of date. Constant at 1L.

d. Dot left of left side of wagon. Constant at 2R.
e. Dot at bottom left of large wheel. Constant at 6R.

f. Dot inside loop of "6" in denomination. Constant at 12R.

22¢ Earth

a. Plate 2222. "Comet" variety. White smear or uninked area above the Earth at about 1 o'clock, resulting in a comet-like appearance. Constant at 1L. (SAdams, Washburn)

25¢ Flag over Yosemite

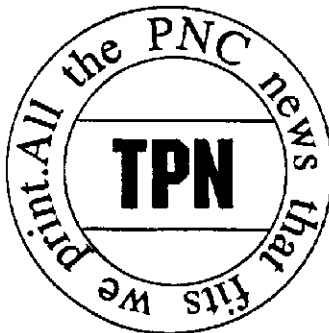
a. Bottom parts of the plate number uninked. In addition to the previous plates reported (Phosphored 2, 3, 7, 9), phosphored Plate 1 has also been found. The degree that is uninked varies from 10% to 40%. (Cibulskas)

b. Plate 9i, "almost double number." The report in the last issue of TPN has prompted the report of an additional example of an oversized miscut that resulted in a whole plate number at the bottom of the stamp with daylight below and about 75% to 85% of a number on top. (Holtz-hoff)

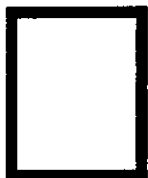


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